

of our shuttle workforce, and move ahead with the shuttle's successor. These objectives are compatible, desirable, and overlap with the President's stated intentions to strengthen technology as our economic base.

In conclusion, I call on the leaders of this body to revamp the NASA budget and to think about the implications should we travel down the path as currently set. America can do better, and future generations of Americans deserve better.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN SUPPORT OF 2009 SUPPLEMENTAL BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lend my strong support for the supplemental aid funding that the House will be considering this week. This bill represents accountability to the taxpayers and a robust commitment to our national security and stability around the world.

In December, I had the privilege of visiting with our troops and military leaders in Afghanistan. I met with Americans who are doing incredible work to help the Afghan people take ownership of their economy and provide security in their neighborhoods. The administration's plan for refocusing our attention on Afghanistan incorporates both the U.S. military component but also builds up training for the Afghan military and police, government reforms, funding for economic development, and training of the Afghan people to grow alternative crops and build roads and irrigation systems.

I want to ensure that our troops in Afghanistan are as safe as possible. Therefore, I'm proud to support the fiscal 2009 supplemental bill which includes \$2.2 billion more than requested for mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles to protect our troops. Not only is it imperative that we provide servicemembers everything they need to complete their mission safely, we must also provide them with everything they have earned upon their return to civilian life.

Our troops and their families have given everything to this mission. We know that some of our troops have missed family milestones, others have suffered financial setbacks, and many others have experienced psychological trauma. This bill provides for expanded counseling services, state-of-the-art equipment for our wounded warriors, and funds to reintegrate our troops

back into civilian life and the workforce when they return home.

Some members of the military were told that their service would last a certain amount of time, and then they were told that they would be "stop-losses"—that means that their tour would be extended. To me, this shows a certain amount of disrespect for those who put on the uniform. It was a difficult decision to ask them to go back, but there also needs to be a sense of fairness on how they're compensated for that. It doesn't help their readiness or our readiness for our national security to have low morale among our troops. That is why I am very proud that this supplemental retroactively pays servicemembers and veterans \$500 for every month that they've served under stop-loss orders since 2001. This is long overdue, and it's the right thing to do.

Our troops in Afghanistan will also be safer if we find regional solutions; that will include strengthening our current initiatives in Pakistan. Recently, General Petraeus, who is doing an excellent job for us, came to Palm Beach County in Florida in my district. We talked about it, and he told me—and I think we all understand this, as members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, that Pakistan and Afghanistan have become a single threat and a single issue because of this threat.

Training the Pakistani security forces to confront the Taliban will help the Pakistani Government regain its foothold and prevent it from being a failed state, which is an unacceptable threat to us and the region. This could not be more urgent. Our aid must communicate security priorities, including the Pakistani Government's assurances to safeguard the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan, and also to secure the nuclear facilities and weapons that they have.

Lastly, I would like to touch upon how the supplemental aid bill treats aid to the Middle East.

President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and Special Envoy Mitchell have provided U.S. leadership in the region to advance the causes of peace and security. However, the engagement would become more difficult if the Palestinians were to form a national unity government, including Hamas.

I support our current policy—no aid to terrorist organizations, no aid to any group that incites violence, promotes and implements terrorist attacks, and kidnaps young men without regard to human rights. This bill that we're considering is clear: no aid to Hamas.

In the event that a unity government denounces violence, abides by PLO and PA agreements, and recognizes Israel as a Jewish state, then we can start the conversation about aid. In that case, according to this bill, if the President can certify that these conditions have been met, then aid can be released to the unity government and only under those circumstances.

Furthermore, current restrictions maintain that U.S. taxpayer funds to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, UNRWA, which administers aid to Palestinian refugees, may not be used or diverted to fund terrorism or any activities of a terrorist group. I would urge the State Department to ensure that these restrictions are followed in both the letter and the spirit of the law, and to remain absolutely vigilant in investigating any possible infractions.

Finally, I would like to continue to bring attention to the cause of Gilad Shalit, who remains captive by Hamas. He was kidnapped in 2006. I urge all interested parties, including Egypt, to use their influence to ensure his safe return. Though not included in the legislative language, I urge the State Department to make it clear to all aid recipients of this bill that Gilad's return remains a foreign policy priority.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude and ask for this legislation to be adopted by this House to send a strong message to our troops.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATSON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GINGREY of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.